

Early Settlers, Founding Of Pocahontas

By SHIRLEY DONNELLY

Long has it been in the heart of West Virginia, the site of West Virginia's 40th anniversary is getting pretty well along in its 40th year.



In 1801, then called the county of Randolph, it was a small, remote, and largely unsettled area. It was a part of the great West Virginia's early settlement.

John Lewis, one of the early settlers, was a man of many talents. He was a farmer, a trader, and a leader. He was one of the first to settle in the area, and he was one of the first to build a house.

There at Jamestown one of the settlers was John Lewis. He was a man of many talents. He was a farmer, a trader, and a leader. He was one of the first to settle in the area, and he was one of the first to build a house.

settled in the big county's name and other places, too.

FIRST WHITE MEN to settle in Pocahontas County were John Lewis and Daniel Smith. It was in 1799 that they reached the mouth of Kanawha Creek and established a cabin on the banks of the Greenbrier River.

Smith returned some 40 years later where he had killed him. He was in the area in the 1830s, and he was one of the first to settle in the area.

When Lewis and Smith settled at present day Marlinton they established the oldest settlement in western Virginia.

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Greenbrier River rises in Pocahontas County and flows in a northwesterly direction, crossing the county in half. It and the Kanawha are the largest rivers within the state.

John Lewis, one of the early settlers, was a man of many talents. He was a farmer, a trader, and a leader. He was one of the first to settle in the area, and he was one of the first to build a house.

ANOTHER EARLY PIONEER in Pocahontas was Col. John McNeil. He was the first actual settler at what was called the Little Lewis. He was born near Winchester, Va., but moved to Cumberland Valley in Maryland.

One day he came to Little Lewis. In about the year 1798, while hunting he came upon two white trappers, Chance and James Kemmons, in search of a spot to settle.

They came back to Little Lewis and there McNeil built a log house for himself as a home of work.

McNeil joined Andrew Lewis's Army and fought in the Battle of Point Pleasant. While McNeil was away on the Point Pleasant campaign his infant child died.

Hard by Little Lewis in Pocahontas is the quiet cemetery where Mr. and Mrs. John McNeil are buried. There, too, lie Charles and Edward Kemmons and their wives and other victims of the big Shawnee battle at Point Pleasant.

JOHN McNEEL's settler Little Lewis, fancying himself to be a fugitive from justice, recalls how Walker Kelly settled Cedar Grove at the mouth of Kelly's Creek in Kanawha County.

Berthamann was killed by the two Pringle brothers, who were army deserters from Fort Pitt. It is said that he had one's family back to Pocahontas, some 10 years.

By SHIRLEY DONNELLY

When time and space are not too plentiful, I was writing last about the first settler at Pocahontas County who had lived for years at Marlinton.



McNeil, one of the early settlers, was a man of many talents. He was a farmer, a trader, and a leader. He was one of the first to settle in the area, and he was one of the first to build a house.

On Oct. 22, 1822, William Lewis, McNeil and Margaret, from Lewis County, were the founders of the county.

It is said that Lewis had a family when he first came to the area. He was a man of many talents. He was a farmer, a trader, and a leader. He was one of the first to settle in the area, and he was one of the first to build a house.

HARKIN is the third story of Pocahontas County. This man had Pocahontas connections.

On the first of July, 1861, this man had to leave the Confederate Army to accept a substitute. For some reason he decided to join a substitute.

Rank of this emergency action of the Confederate government was that, in April, 1861, this man had to go to war in person. This it was that Franklin Andrew Harkins found himself a soldier in one company, Company "E", 14th Virginia Cavalry.

He was carried off to Camp Chase, Ohio, where he was confined until March 17, 1861. Then it was that the rumors of disease and starvation compelled him to take the oath of allegiance. He was released and sent home, just about half dead.

It was his opinion that letting the men starve and perish from disease was the best way of getting rid of the Confederate soldiers.

On April 10, 1861, the first and only to leave the area. He was a man of many talents. He was a farmer, a trader, and a leader. He was one of the first to settle in the area, and he was one of the first to build a house.

Camp Chase must have been a hell, I must be sure the new day. A man of many talents. He was a farmer, a trader, and a leader. He was one of the first to settle in the area, and he was one of the first to build a house.

EVAN JACKSON, of Marlinton, was in war in those days. One of the first to settle in the area, and he was one of the first to build a house.

During the war Dr. Evans dropped his civilian practice and served as a surgeon alongside his fellow Virginians. He was with the 10th Cavalry, Va. Cavalry.

WHAT OF THE MINISTERS of Pocahontas during the Civil War? Well, to start with, there was no minister in the county.

One I know of was the Rev. George Fyfe Allen. His parents were both born in Pocahontas, but died in Iowa, where the tall one grew.

Between 1860 and 1861 he was in the area. He was a man of many talents. He was a farmer, a trader, and a leader. He was one of the first to settle in the area, and he was one of the first to build a house.

ward Kennison and their wives and other heroes of the big Shawnee battle at Point Pleasant. One of God's days I plan to go to Hillsboro to roam a bit.

JOHN McNEEL'S settling Little Levels, fancying himself to be a fugitive from justice, recalls how Walter Kelly settled Cedar Grove at the mouth of Kelly's Creek in Kanawha County did the same thing. Rumor was he had killed a man in North Carolina and fled into the wilderness to get away.

Buckhannon was settled by the two Pringle brothers who were army deserters from Fort Pitt. It never pays to trace one's family back too goshawfully far, does it? More of Pocahontas, come tomorrow.

in 1715 these two reached the mouth of Knapps Creek and erected a cabin on the banks of the Greenbrier River. Subsequently they fell out in an argument over religion and one of them moved into a hollow tree.

Sewell later moved some 40 miles west where Indians killed him. His fame is kept alive in the Big Sewell Mountain range which bears his name. Big Sewell Mountain in Fayette County is the highest point on the Midland Trail (U. S. Route 60). Sewell was killed in September, 1776.

When Sewell and Marlin settled at present day Marlinton they established the oldest settlement on western waters in West Virginia.

When Pocahontas was formed Huntersville was made the county seat. Thither came hunters to trade pelts, sell ginseng, and other things. Since this trading post was the rendezvous of hunters the place naturally was given the name of Huntersville. Over 60 years ago the county seat of justice was transferred to Marlinton where it is to this day.

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brary at Upson Downs is a copy
of Knauss' "Story of Camp Chase".
It bears the names of those who
died there—by the hundreds upon
hundreds of thousands, too.

EVEN DOCTORS of medicine
went to war in those days. One
such medicine man was Dr. Cy-
rus P. Bryan. Folks up around
Hillsboro will be able to recall the
stories their grandparents told
them about this man of mercy.
There's where he returned to
practice his profession in 1873. Dr.
Bryan was a graduate of the Jef-
ferson Medical College in the class
of 1855.

During the war Dr. Bryan
dropped his civilian practice and
served as a soldier alongside his
fellow Virginians. He was with the
Bath County, Va., Cavalry. He
acted as surgeon of the military
post at Warm Springs, Va., in the
fall and winter of 1862. From July
1, 1863, to April 5, 1865, he sat
in the House of Burgesses, the
lower house of the Virginia As-
sembly.

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WHAT OF THE MINISTERS of Pocahontas during the Civil War? Well, to start out with, there just weren't many of them.

One I know about was the Rev. George Preston Moore. His parents were both born in Pocahontas but died in Iowa, where the tall corn grows, to hear Iowans tell it. Reverend Moore was twice married. His second wife was born June 30, 1844 and her marriage anniversary was the day of her birth, in 1865. She was Ruth J. Gay. His first wife was Elizabeth M. Poage.

Reverend Moore was not one to galivant about. All his life was spent within a quarter of a mile of where he was born. He did not take part in the Civil War but did act as quartermaster agent at Edray. He was chosen to many public offices by his fellow citizens of Pocahontas. Long was he postmaster at Edray and for some time he was justice of the peace.

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me back to Little Levels McNeel built a log meet-as a house of worship, called the White Pole being one of the earliest rest of the Alleghanies; very oldest.

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Hillsboro in Pocahontas cemetery where Mr. n McNeel are buried. lie Charles and Ed-on and their wives and of the big Shawnee int Pleasant. One of plan to go to Hills-a bit.

EEL'S settling Little ing himself to be a justice, recalls how settled Cedar Grove of Kelly's Creek in unty did the same was he had killed a Carolina and fled erness to get away. was settled by the brothers who were s from Fort Pitt. It trace one's family awfully far, does it? ahontas, come to-

HARKEN to the thumbnail story of Franklin Andrew Renick. This man had Pocahontas connections.

On the first of July, 1862, this man had to enter the Confederate Army or submit a substitute. For some reason he elected to hire a substitute in his stead. Not all men relish the field, you know. Then it came to pass the substitute law was repealed.

Result of this emergency action of the Confederate government was that, in April, 1864, this man Renick had to go to war in person. This it was that Franklin Andrew Renick found himself two soldiers in one service, Company "E", 14th Virginia Cavalry. So he served until the drums of war ceased to throb and the flags of battle were furled. But fate caught up with him and the real Franklin Andrew Renick was captured as a prisoner of war on Sept. 9, 1864.

He was carted off to Camp Chase, Ohio, where he was confined until March 17, 1865. Then it was that the ravages of disease and starvation compelled him to take the oath of allegiance. He was released and sent home, just about half dead. He saw much of the corruption that obtained in that awful prison. He used to tell how he saw federal government food and medicines that were never allowed to reach their destination. He saw how federal officers could be bribed into letting prisoners escape for a price, or have their exchange expedited just for a handful of silver.

It was his opinion that letting the men starve and perish from disease was the best way of getting rid of the unfortunate wretches there confined by the Washington government. He was bitter as gaul over the whole thing, and who could blame him?

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Cornstalk at Point Pleasant on Monday, Oct. 10, 1774, in the first

battle of the American Revolution.

ANOTHER EARLY PIONEER

in Pocahontas was Col. John McNeel. He was the first actual settler at what was called the Little Levels. He was born near Winchester, Va., but migrated to Cumberland Valley in Maryland. There he got into a fight with another fellow and thought he had killed his antagonist. Result was he hit the trail, counting himself a fugitive from justice.

One day he came to Little Levels, in about the year 1765. While hunting he came upon two white frontiersmen, Charles and James Kennison, in search of a spot to settle. From them McNeel learned that the man he had fought was not dead, nor was he injured overly much. He went back east of the mountains with the Kennisons. There he married Martha Davis, a woman of Welsh ancestry, having been born in Wales in 1743.

They came back to Little Levels and there McNeel built a log meeting house as a house of worship. It was called the White Pole Church, being one of the earliest churches west of the Alleghanies; maybe the very oldest.

McNeel joined Andrew Lewis's Army and fought in the Point Pleasant battle. While McNeel was away on the Point Pleasant cam-

were married. She was the daughter of Joseph and Mary. Eleven children were born in the blessed union, albeit Mary Beard died Oct. 6, 1831. She had been born Oct. 25, 1831.

In spite of the fact that the family when the toll was sounded in 1861, William Neel felt honor bound to go to the state of Virginia where he was born. During the last of the Civil War he was in Co. "F" of the 1st Cavalry. In return for his life in high places of honor, the citizens of Pocahontas elected McNeel to the legislature in 1872 for a four year term. They sent him to the legislature first as a delegate and then as a state Senator. His neighbors could tell you that one can fearlessly raise and spray a dark. He was an honorable veteran when they took him from his labors.

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and buried her babe herself.

Hard by Hillsboro in Pocahontas
is the quaint cemetery where Mr.
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first places of public worship on the Western Waters.

Just north of Millpoint is Stephens Hole. Here Stephen Sewell, one of the two first residents of Marlinton, wintered in a limestone cave—running water convenient—along in the 1750's. He went to Greenbrier only to lose his hair to the Indians, being murdered on Big Sewell, the mountain which bears his name to this day. My little effort to point a moral fell flat with the Ronceverte ladies as to how such was all one great lesson for Pocahontas people, never to wander from their own fireside, even if it is but a hole in the wall.

There is a local tradition that a paymaster of one Ohio regiment, in the excitement of the Battle of Droop Mountain, absconded with the monthly payroll of his regiment, and hid the money in Stephens Hole until he could come back and safely carry it away. I never could find out how the news leaked out. If that Yankee did hide the money far back in the hole, all I can say he was built

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the hole, all I can say he was built
on slimmer lines than this editor, as I
got stuck in the narrow place the last
time I crawled there for to explore.

Some years ago a most interesting
and valuable history reading book
came into my hands. In it is record-
ed something about a carpet-bag gov-
ernor of a southern state during the
reconstruction times; a bad actor, in-
famous, among other things, for hav-
ing run off with a monthly payroll of
the Ohio regiment for which he was
the pay officer. Some of these times,
through idle curiosity, I will try to
check up to see if the local tale and
record of the book can be connected.

Nearby Stephens Hole is the Bridg-
er Mountain. The predominating peaks
of Bridger are the Pinnacle and the
Swago. Here in the Gap the Bridger
boys, James and John, were way-
laid and murdered by Indians in 1784.
They were on their way from the
Bridger home on Greenbrier River to
the fort at Millpoint. There is contro-
versy as to the exact year, but I still
hold for 1784. I will write a chapter
on it some week.

On up the Seneca Trail—the War-

just above the mouth of Swago.

On Droop Mountain is an interesting cranberry bog, with its spagnum moss and interesting plants which like wet feet. The ladies did not care to mess around in the damp much. Also on Droop Mountain is the deposit of Droop sandstone, white and fine. I am told this sandstone is peculiar to this region, stretching to Elk Mountain on the north and to Spring Creek Mountain to the south.

On Droop Mountain November 6, 1863, was fought the most important

me now I must be polite to company
in the county.

My father said the name Droop was given because the eastern end of this great mountain had the appearance of drooping, or hanging or crouching from the open savannah country of the Big Levels of Greenbrier county. The earliest record of the name I have been able to find is the court records of Botetourt county along about 1775, where reference was made to one Charles Kennison, a juror, who lived beyond Droop Mountain. In that day, the line between Botetourt and Augusta county crossed Greenbrier river just above the mouth of Swago.

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Hillsboro nestles in the Little Levels;
there John McNeel and the Kennison
Brothers settled in the uneasy 1760's;
there was established in 1843 the
Academy, a preparatory branch of the
University of Virginia; there in 1793
was organized Oak Grove Church,—
sturdy and strong to this day; there
was built during the Revoution the
White Pole Meeting House, one of the
first places of public worship on the
Western Waters.

Just north of Millpoint is Stephens

By **SHIRLEY DONNELLY**

Yesterday I left off with the promise that today you would get some Civil War stories to read in this column.

The biggest battle of the war in West Virginia was fought at Droop Mountain on Nov. 6, 1863. This



battle resulted in the retreat of the Confederates who were greatly outnumbered in the six-hour struggle.

Nowhere between the tide-washed shores of old Virginia and the rock-ribbed re-

gions of the Alleghanies were there to be found more loyal southerners. To this day the county is overwhelmingly Democratic.

Capt. D. A. Stofer mustered a company of Confederates at Huntersville and it was subsequently attached to the 31st Virginia Infantry Regiment. The first com-

HUGH P. McGLAUGHLIN was born in Highland Co., Va., Aug. 1, 1843. His family moved to Pocahontas when this lad was but nine. Came the Civil War and the 18-year-old enlisted in Co. "I", 25th Virginia Infantry. Throughout the war he served the Confederacy. He was captured and taken first to Point Lookout, and from there to Elmira, N. Y.

He had one brother in the service who was also taken prisoner of war. This unfortunate brother died of scurvy in the Elmira prisoner-of-war camp. He died Nov. 11, 1864. After the war's close, Hugh McGlaughlin came back to his home in the hill country of Pocahontas and went to farming up there close to Huntersville.

WHEN HE WAS 30 years old Daniel A. Stofer moved to Pocahontas. He hailed from Augusta Co., Va., where he was born at

Middlebrook on May 5, 1821. He

THE EARLY COMER to Pocahontas was Jacob Warwick. He lived was the part of county that is now included in Pocahontas. He had a whole lot of Negro slaves. One slave owned as "Old Ben" and he ran the Warwick farming was called the Clover farm.

When Warwick and "Old Ben" were out salting cattle on the hills they were ambushed by Yankees. Warwick's horse was shot and he was beat it to the house and hid there in safety. Then he got the rest of the slaves and hid in the hills until the Yankees had moved on. Warwick didn't stop until he reached Jacksons River in Vir-

THE CIVIL WAR in 1861 was a hard time for Pocahontas. The county had to be done over because the old records were lost. Pocahontas would not have the seat of the contending county seat was at Littleton and William Curry was in a dual status as clerk and circuit clerk. He was a Yankee and the Yankees were coming in the armies of aliens and at anything. So did the court, who ordered to get a move on and the records were where they were safe.

Pocahontas the good people much dread of the Yankees as their and the tomahawk of the ages. Consequent upon the court's order to move the court to a place of safety Curry carried them to Joel Hill down the Little Levels.

The Little Levels were not rested until January when Curry carried the records to the hills. There at the hills the records were kept in the hills of Alleghany

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Capt. D. A. Stofer mustered a company of Confederates at Huntersville and it was subsequently attached to the 31st Virginia Infantry Regiment. The first company of volunteers in Pocahontas was that of Capt. Andrew G. McNeel. It was organized at Littleton. This was early in the spring of 1861 when the first news of the war was heard in Pocahontas. That first company was disbanded that fall because arms failed to reach them. Arms were shipped from Richmond but were copped off somewhere along the route.

Third company of Pocahontas volunteers to line up was the one commanded by Captain Arbogast of Greenbank, up there where the big astronomical ear is today being erected to listen to the music of the spheres. Arbogast's Company was attached to the 31st Virginia Infantry Regiment. Captain Arbogast seems to have been on the ball and was promoted to major in the regiment. One Pocahontas officer by the name of Lt. H. M. Poague was killed in action at

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born on May 5, 1831. He signed up for service in 1846 with Mexico and served under Gen. Zachary ("Old Rough and Ready") Taylor, destined to become our 12th President. He volunteered in 1846 for Mexican War service.

When the Civil War broke out he volunteered in the cause of the native state of Virginia. His brothers joined the Confederacy, too. One never returned. Daniel A. Stofer was at the front at the right time and was commissioned a captain.

This intrepid soldier received five separate wounds in battle, all five wounds inflicted in less than one minute! One wound was in his chest, two were in his breast, two were in his left leg. When he was struck in the left leg his bone was broken in two places. One of the two wounds entered his breast and